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**By George W. Smith, M. A.**

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INSTRUCTOR LITERATURE SERIES

# STORY OF ILLINOIS

*By Geo<sup>W</sup>. W. Smith. M. A.*

Department of History, State Normal University, Carbondale ;  
Author of "A Student's History of Illinois."



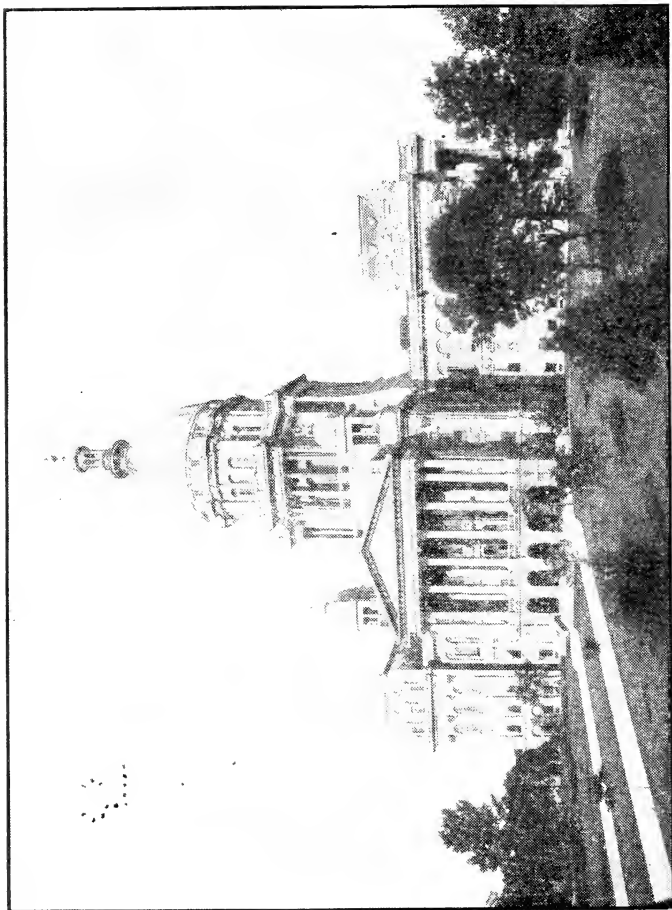
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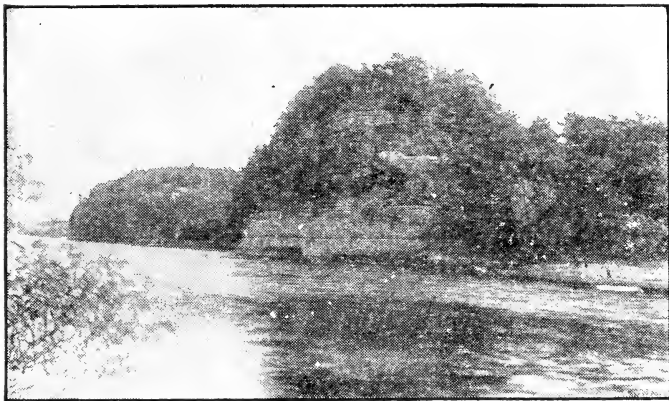
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The Present State Capitol, Springfield

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## Story of Illinois



Starved Rock

### The French in the New World

French fishermen frequented the shores of the Gulf of St. Lawrence as early as 1504. They had no thought of making explorations or settlements. They knew little about the land features of the New World, and the little knowledge they had created scarcely a ripple of interest in France.

The coming to the St. Lawrence of James Cartier in 1534 was the first real sign of French interest in America. He was an explorer rather than a founder of empire. His experiment in attempting to plant a colony at Montreal in the winter of 1540-41 proved a failure, and little more is heard of the French in Canada till the coming, in 1608, of Samuel Champlain, a man of great vigor of mind and body, deep insight into human nature and of pure and lofty purposes.

Champlain had previously visited the New World; once in company with DeMont in the year 1604, when the latter had planted a colony on the Bay of Fundy, at the mouth of the St. Croix river. Champlain was a restless soul and his activity led him to become fur trader, explorer or colonizer as the occasion seemed to require. He founded Quebec in the fall of 1608 and when the spring of 1609 arrived he found only eight alive out of twenty-eight of his colonists. He formed an alliance with the Canadian Indians, the deadly enemies of the Iroquois who lived in what is now New York state. This hatred between the two great families of Indians prevented the French from reaching the Illinois country through New York and along the Ohio river.

Champlain brought to New France a number of priests, who were stationed along the St. Lawrence and around the great lakes. These missionary points immediately became the centers of interest for the French traders, who now began a systematic traffic in furs and peltries.

After the death of Champlain, which occurred in 1635, a bit of diplomacy was needed to hold the Indians about the lakes to the cause of the French king. A congress was held at Sault Ste. Marie in the year 1670. At this congress the Indians around the lakes pledged anew their loyalty to the great King Louis XIV, who told them they should be the children of his especial care.

Priests and traders had by 1670 visited nearly every tribe as far west as the head of Lake Superior. From these people wonderful stories had reached the governor of Canada at Quebec. Even the court at Versailles had heard of the interior of the new continent. Count Frontenac was sent as governor of New France in the fall of 1672. He began at once to prosecute to a successful end an expedition into the interior which his predecessor, Courcelle, had set on foot.

The persons selected for this hazardous undertaking were Louis Joliet and Father Pere Marquette. The former was to represent the government and the latter the church. No better selections could have been made. These men by nature and by training were well fitted for this great mission. Joliet was a business man of rare experience gained from contact with the natives. He was fearless, loyal to his king and ambitious to extend

his king's dominions in the New World. Marquette had long contemplated a visit to the famous Illinois Indians and their country.

Joliet was dispatched to Mackinaw under orders from Count Frontenac. He arrived December 8, 1672, and made his mission known to Father Marquette, who says:

The day of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, whom I had always invoked \* \* \* to obtain of God the grace to be able to visit the nations on the River Mississippi, was identically that on which M. Joliet arrived with orders of the Counte de Frontenac, our Governor, and M. Talon, our intendant, to make this discovery with me. I was the more enraptured at the good news, as I saw my designs on the point of being accomplished, and myself in the happy necessity of exposing my life for the salvation of all these nations, and particularly for the Illinois \* \* \* who had earnestly entreated me to carry the word of God to their country.

The preparations for the journey were very simple—five voyageurs, two canoes, dried beef and parched corn. All were eager for the journey. They rowed with a hearty good will, bouyed up by the contemplation of visions of beauty, wonder and wealth.

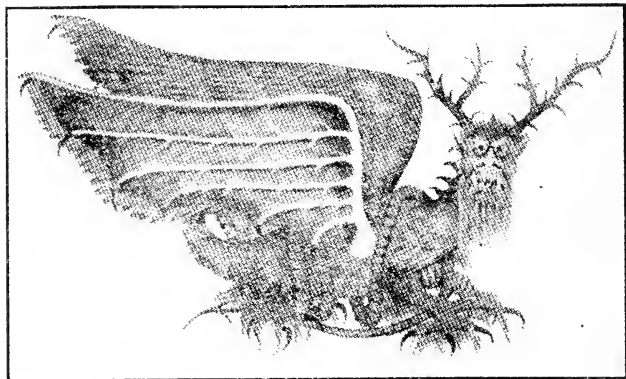
The route lay along the west shore of Lake Michigan, up Green Bay, up Fox river, over the portage, down the Wisconsin, and out on the bosom of the great Father of Waters, June 17, 1672. It was a wonderful experience. The grandeur of the river, the scenery of the bluffs, hills and woodlands. The abundance of plant and animal life and the prospect of seeing the Illini—all conspired to render the day the most momentous in their lives.

The journey down the river began with little or no delay. Marquette was thoughtful to record accurately the many things of interest—plants, fruits, animals, birds, the lay of the land and the character of the Indians.

Just above the present site of Alton they saw painted on the rocks the famous Piasa Bird. Marquette describes it as follows:

As we coasted along rocks, frightful for their height and length, we saw two monsters painted on these rocks, which startled us at first, and on which the boldest Indian dare not gaze long. They are as large as a calf, with horns on the head like a deer, a frightful look, red eyes, bearded like a tiger, the face somewhat like a man's, the body covered with scales, and the tail so long that it twice makes the turn of the body, passing over the head and down between the legs and ending at last in a fish's tail. Green, red and a kind of black are the colors employed. On the whole, these two monsters are so well painted that we could not

believe any Indian to have been the designer, as good painters in France would find it hard to do as well; beside this, they are so high upon the rock that it is hard to get conveniently at them to paint them. This is pretty nearly the figure of these monsters as I drew it off.



The Piasa Monster

Grand Tower, a monster rock which rears its head in the Mississippi a few miles above the mouth of the Big Muddy river, was passed in safety, and on they go to the mouth of the Arkansas. Here they were counseled to return, and having all the information they sought they concluded to do so.

From the mouth of the Illinois river they proceeded up that stream. They halted at the village of the Kaskaskia Indians, near the present city of LaSalle. Here Marquette preached to the Indians and promised to return and tell them more about Jesus. They continued their return journey to Green Bay when they separated, Joliet to go to Quebec and Marquette to seek rest and regain his failing health.

The next fall, 1674, Marquette started on his promised return to Kaskaskia. He was compelled to remain at the Chicago portage on account of ill health till the spring of 1675. He reached Kaskaskia and founded the first church in Illinois—the church of the Immaculate Conception. He remained but a few days, and on his return journey died at Ludington, Michigan. His body was interred by tender and loving nand's, his bones being later buried in the mission church of St. Ignace at Mackinaw.



Chevalier de La Salle, a native of old Rouen, Normandy, and a man of vigor, conceived the idea of exploring the Mississippi and building a line of forts from its mouth, by way of the lakes, to Quebec. He visited France, was presented to the King, received a charter to the interior of the continent, collected craftsmen and materials, formed the friendship of Henri de Tonti and returned to Fort Frontenac at the outlet of Lake Ontario. He built a ten-ton ship above the Niagara Falls and proceeded to Mackinaw and Green Bay where he loaded it with furs and started it to his warehouses at Niagara. He never heard of it after that.

La Salle now proceeded with a company of thirty-five or more by way of the St. Joseph river, the Kankakee portage, into the Illinois river, and halted at the Indian village of Kaskaskia. Here he found an abundance of corn for his little army of soldiers, carpenters, blacksmiths, sawyers, priests and voyageurs. Just below the present Peoria Lake he halted again and after long conferences with the Indians concluded to spend the winter at that point. He built Fort Crevecoeur and in the spring of 1679 he returned to Fort Frontenac to replenish his supplies and to get some trace of his ship, the Griffin. Tonti was left in charge of La Salle's interests and told to build Fort St. Louis on Starved Rock. An Indian war dispersed La Salle's followers and he was obliged to gather men and supplies for another expedition.

In January 1682, La Salle, Tonti and about thirty followers reached Fort Crevecoeur. Here they built boats for the journey to the mouth of the Mississippi River, which they reached in April. They erected the cross, raised the coat-of-arms of France, and read a proclamation declaring all the territory drained by the Mississippi, the territory of the King of France.

This being done, they returned to Canada. La Salle finding much opposition to himself in Canada, conceived the idea of reaching the Illinois country through the mouth of the Mississippi, thus avoiding his enemies in New France. He went to France to perfect plans for this new venture. Tonti was to stay in the Illinois country, build Fort St. Louis and care for La Salle's interests until the latter's return by way of the Mississippi.

La Salle met with favor at the French court. He re-

turned to the Gulf of Mexico, but not being able to find the mouth of the river, was landed on the coast of Texas where he was later killed by one of his own men. Tonti remained loyal to his charge at Fort St. Louis till he heard of the death of La Salle. He had built up a great confederacy about Starved Rock. Indian tribes had received assignments of lands and had begun the cultivation of the soil. No more romantic story could be told than the one of Fort St. Louis and Tonti's Confederacy.

Tonti met with much opposition from the government in New France and worn out in body and spirit he departed for Biloxi in 1700.

### Old Kaskaskia

Marquette founded the mission of the Immaculate Conception in 1675. Different priests ministered at that place till 1700. In the fall of that year the Kaskaskia Indians, the priests and a few French settlers conceived the idea of joining the French near the mouth of the Mississippi River. They took up their journey thither. The priest accompanied his flock, bringing the records and the sacred vessels of the mission. This priest was Father Marest. Father James Gravier seems also to have accompanied them. They passed Cahokia, a village of the Tamaroa Indians, situated a few miles below the present city of East St. Louis. Here Father Marest was taken ill and was left behind, Father Gravier taking his place with the tribe.

A few miles above the mouth of the Kaskaskia River, at a great bend in the Mississippi, the Indians left that stream and crossing a short portage arrived at the Kaskaskia. Here they stopped whether with the intention of later moving on down the Mississippi will never be known. At least they never moved from this place and the village of Kaskaskia became the first permanent settlement in Illinois.

The records of the church are still preserved and have heretofore been in the keeping of the priest in charge, but it is reported they have been taken to St. Louis within recent years. The earliest date in these records is March 20, 1692. It records the baptism of an infant, Peter Aco by name.

Thus was laid the foundations of a permanent village, on the west bank of the Kaskaskia a few miles above where that stream flowed into the Mississippi. It was for half a century the metropolis of the Mississippi valley and the center of fashion and power in Louisiana. To this village came Crozat in 1712, to whom the King had granted the entire country for a period of fifteen years. With him were many Frenchmen direct from the mother country. His dream of wealth was never realized and he resigned his charter and returned to France in 1717.

The Great Western Company, the product of the brain of John Law, the great Scotch financier, was granted the province of Louisiana the same year Crozat returned it to the king. In 1718 there arrived at Kaskaskia Lieutenant Boisbriant, with a small detachment of French troops, to guard the interests of the Western Company and of the king. Boisbriant did not tarry long at Kaskaskia, but selected a point some sixteen miles up the river from the present city of Chester where he built a fort which he named Fort Chartres. The fort was about half a mile from the Mississippi River, in the alluvial plain two or three miles from the bluffs which lay to the east. It was a wooden structure of the stockade form, enclosing space enough for barracks, magazines and warehouse for the company. To the east, at the foot of the bluffs, which here rise a hundred and fifty to two hundred feet above the bottom land, there sprang up the village of Prairie du Rocher; and near the fort a small village, New Chartres, which depended upon the military station for its support.

The fort was barely done when there arrived from France a very noted personage in the person of Phillipe Francois de Renault. He came as the representative of the Western Company, bringing a large body of miners, timbermen, and slaves. He came to develop the supposed mines of precious metals thought to be in the hills of Southern Illinois, which were to yield the wealth to enrich France and Frenchmen. He spread his miners and laborers over the Ozarks and began to dig, but with no return. After many months of fruitless endeavor he abandoned the search and secured a grant of land three miles wide and six miles long abutting on the Mississippi a mile or so above Fort Chartres. On this grant he built

the village of St. Phillipe, settled his hundred slaves and began to farm on an extensive scale. This is the origin of slavery in Illinois.

By 1730 there were six French villages in what we know as the American Bottom. They were, Kaskaskia, Prairie du Rocher, New Chartres, St. Phillipe, Cahokia and Prairie du Pont, a village just south of Cahokia. The American Bottom included all the alluvial plain between the bluffs and the river and reaching from Chester to Alton. Its fertility is unsurpassed by any lands within the state.



**Last Days of Kaskaskia.**

As the town was disappearing in the Mississippi River.

Kaskaskia was the most important of the six villages. It grew rapidly. It is a tradition that the Jesuits founded a college in the town as early as 1720, which prospered till the order was suppressed in 1764. The Indian life was merged into French life and the customs became those of French villagers. They were an easy going, happy, thriftless people; nothing disturbed their quiet ongoing. Wheat, corn and vegetables were raised, mills for grinding and sawing were erected and many grants of land were made by the representatives of the French government.

## Illinois in the French and Indian War

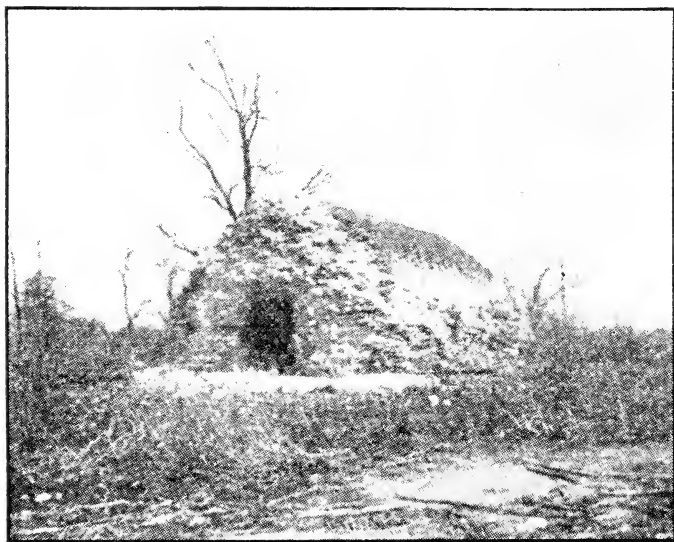
At the close of King George's war in 1748, the French began active preparations to hold New France and Louisiana and to possess the valley of the Ohio. To this end the forts reaching from Quebec to the mouth of the Mississippi were strengthened, and plans made to build others in the Ohio valley. The conflict of interests between the English and French about the "forks of the Ohio" is familiar to all.

Orders came from France to rebuild Fort Chartres. The first fort had been of wood, the new one was to be of stone. It was 500 by 450 feet, the walls being three feet thick and fifteen feet high, with port holes for small arms and cannon. The entrance gate was an artistic affair of cut stone above which was a sort of balcony, in which officers and ladies watched maneuvers of the soldiers on the parade ground which lay out before the fort. Within the walls was a space of about four acres. There were numerous buildings—the commandant's house, barracks for soldiers, guard house with dungeon cells, a bakery, magazines for stores, servants' quarters and stables for officers' horses. There were two wells, both of which were walled neatly with broken stone and both of which remain as they were a hundred and fifty years ago. In the corners or bastions of the fort were elevated places upon which the gunners were to operate the cannon. In one of the bastions was the powder magazine which remains today in very good condition. The walls and the buildings have disappeared but their foundations may easily be traced.

This fort was erected at a cost of \$1,000,000 and to it came the flower of the French army. Officers of rank, ladies of high social standing and servants in large numbers found their homes within the walls of this great fort in the wilderness. Cannon bristled from every angle of the walls; the powder magazine was well stocked; the commissary department was abundantly supplied; and everything betokened a powerful and extravagant nation.

The social life of the fort was keyed to a high pitch. Kaskaskia, not far away, was a city of two thousand inhabitants. Joyous life reigned in this western metropo-

lis. Parisian styles and gowns were plentiful. Social functions were frequent. The official and military life of Fort Chartres and the civil life of Cahokia and Kaskaskia mingled freely together. Weddings were of frequent occurrence. They were of course celebrated in the church. The invited guests usually included the entire official life, military and civil, it mattered not how lowly the contracting parties were in social standing. The names of Rocheblave and Neyon de Villiers as wit-



Remains of Old Fort Chartres.—The Powder Magazine.

nesses to marriages are common in the parish records. As many as ten to fifteen persons of rank often signed the certificate of marriage.

When Washington approached Fort Du Quesne and was met by the French a short distance from the forks of the Ohio, a battle ensued in which Jumonville de Villiers, the French commander, was killed. Washington retreated and took refuge in Fort Necessity. Now when Neyon de Villiers at Fort Chartres heard that his brother had been slain he proceeded in all haste with a detachment of regulars and militia from Fort Chartres to avenge his brother's

death. Neyon de Villiers joined a third brother, Coulon de Villiers, from Canada, and with twelve hundred troops they besieged "Monsieur Washenston" in his little log fort. Washington capitulated July 4, 1774, and returned to Virginia. Thus Illinois has the distinction of furnishing a part of the army which captured the "Father of his Country."

The struggle between England and France for control in America was an unequal one, and upon the fall of Quebec in September, 1759, negotiations looking toward peace were entered upon. In 1763 the treaty was signed. The proclamation issued by General Gage, the commander of the English forces in America, gave the French in Illinois the privilege of leaving the Illinois country with their personal effects or of remaining and taking the oath of allegiance to the English government. It was a sad time about Kaskaskia and the other French villages. The Lilies of France were lowered and the English ensign flung to the breeze. The French villagers sadly took their departure and everywhere the joyous French life disappeared. St. Phillippe had but one inhabitant left, and he was too poor to get away.

The coming of the British soldiers to take possession of the Illinois country was delayed till 1765 on account of the opposition of Pontiac, who refused to believe that the French had been permanently ejected from the country. The British commanders made Fort Chartres headquarters until 1772, when high water changed the course of the Mississippi and threatened the destruction of the fort. The garrison was hastily removed to Kaskaskia where they occupied the abandoned Jesuits' buildings. Here they remained till the outbreak of the Revolution when they were ordered to Canada, and the British interests in the Illinois country were left in the hands of Philip Francois de Rastel, Chevalier de Rocheblave, a Frenchman greatly attached to the British cause.

The French occupancy of the Illinois country through a period of nearly seventy years was a period of great prosperity in the American Bottom. The Indian life which predominated in the first part of the period had gradually disappeared and everywhere there were signs of a slowly growing civilization. The town of Kaskaskia was regularly laid out as a city. The blocks were large

and the lots were roomy. The cottages were neatly built of posts set upright in the ground or upon a foundation. These posts were close together, with their cracks filled with grasses and mud. The roof was thatched of the grasses which grew in abundance in the nearby low places. In later years these cottages were neatly built and as neatly painted. There were many colors, and the effect was very striking. The yards were well kept. There were flower beds and fruit trees in abundance. Well tended vegetable gardens occupied the lot in the rear of the cottage, and a picket fence surrounded each home. Attached to each village was a common field where each villager had assigned him a small quantity of land. Then there was the commons which belonged to each village, where firewood and pasture were free to each cottager. The village life was an easy one of leisure and pleasure.

### Illinois in the Revolutionary Struggle

By the Proclamation of 1763, King George III set apart all territory west of the Alleghanies as the "Indian Country." No more settlements were to be made west of the mountains. In spite of these orders, however, the hardy Virginians, Carolinians, and Georgians began crossing over the mountains and by 1775 there were scores of settlers in what is now West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

When the rupture came between the colonists and the mother country, the Indians of the Illinois country became a menace to the settlers east of the Ohio river. Incursions were made into Kentucky by bloodthirsty bands of Indians from Indiana and Illinois. George Rogers Clark, one of the Kentucky settlers, conceived the plan of capturing Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Vincennes, and Detroit—all held by British garrisons or by French militia.

Clark was made a colonel in the Virginia militia, provided with munitions of war, money, and soldiers, and ordered to attack these British posts. His soldiers were gathered mostly in Virginia and Kentucky, though there were some from other sections. Clark came from Virginia by way of Pittsburg for a part of his supplies and from there down the Ohio to Louisville. There he stop-



ped and organized his little army of less than two hundred men and when all was in readiness he proceeded down the Ohio, landing at old Fort Massac. This historic fort was unoccupied and it seems to have attracted but little attention.

Colonel Clark hid his boats in the mouth of a small stream just above the fort and prepared to march overland to Kaskaskia. Clark's army was small in numbers but large in patriotism. They wore their homespun clothing, coonskin caps, a leather belt which held a dangerous long-bladed knife from which the Indians called them "Long Knives." Many wore moccasins or home-made shoes of their own tanned leather. Their long, small bore rifles were deadly weapons in the hands of the "Long Knives," as they never pulled the trigger till they had taken a bead on an object. They felt their mission of war upon the British posts was entirely justifiable in the light of the certainty that Indian attacks upon the Kentucky settlers were instigated by the British commanders at the British posts.

The overland journey led northwest through Massac county, into Johnson, through Williamson, Jackson, and into Randolph. The route has been pretty definitely settled. While in Williamson county their guides lost their way and General Clark feared treachery, but they soon regained their bearings and the march continued.

On reaching the vicinity of Kaskaskia the little army crossed the river to the west bank about a mile above the town. Here they waited till ten or eleven o'clock and then marched south upon the sleeping village. It was the 4th of July, 1778. The commander of the post, Chevalier de Rocheblave, made a noisy opposition, for which he was put in irons.

On the morrow, the poor, terror-stricken villagers begged the privilege of holding a farewell service in the church. This was granted and later in the morning, through the help of the priest, Father Gibault, quiet was restored. The inhabitants all took the oath of allegiance to Virginia. On the afternoon an expedition was planned to capture Cahokia. This was easily accomplished and the "Long Knives" felt abundantly rewarded for their many days of privations and danger.

The next thing for General Clark was the capture of

Vincennes. Father Gibault and an embassy repaired to that post and in the absence of the British commander and garrison, took possession of the fort and received the oath of allegiance of the villagers. The embassy returned with the good news and General Clark felt his work had been highly successful. But word came to Hamilton in Canada that Vincennes was in the hands of the Americans and he immediately set out for its recap-



Gen. George Rogers Clark

ture. This was easily done. General Clark now saw that he must capture Hamilton or Hamilton would capture him.

It was now February 1779, and all was hurry to march against Vincennes. About one-third of Clark's army were French militia. A boat was sent by the river route

with supplies and cannon, but the little army marched overland. The route was northeast through the present counties of Randolph, Perry, Washington, Jefferson, Marion, Clay, Richland and Lawrence. At one place they were obliged to build rafts to ferry their provision and ammunition across the overflowed lands. Their food gave out before they reached the Wabash and they suffered greatly from hunger and fatigue. They crossed the Wabash at the present site of St. Francisville, and marched northward through the overflowed lands a distance of six or eight miles. This was the most trying part of their journey. They waded in ice-cold water up to their waists, they languished on the dry ground or clung while in the water to the lower limbs of the branches of trees. Some gruel made from deer meat and corn meal saved the life of many a brave soul.

They reached the vicinity of the town and Clark, not wishing to take the villagers completely by surprise, sent a note to the inhabitants warning them of his coming. The fort was bombarded through the night and on the next day, after two or three conferences, Colonel Hamilton surrendered to General Clark. The provisions and ammunition in the fort came in good season for Clark's army. After making disposition of the prisoners and providing for the care of the fort, Clark returned to Kaskaskia.

Word concerning the fall of Kaskaskia and Cahokia having reached the Virginia legislature in the fall of 1778, a vote of thanks was tendered General Clark and his men as follows:

#### IN THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Monday, the 23d Nov. 1778.

Whereas, authentic information has been received that Lieutenant Colonel George Rogers Clark, with a body of Virginia militia, has reduced the British posts in the western part of this commonwealth on the river Mississippi and its branches, whereby great advantage may accrue to the common cause of America, as well as to this commonwealth in particular:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this house are justly due to the said Colonel Clark and the brave officers and men under his command, for their extraordinary resolution and perseverance in so hazardous an enterprise, and for their important services to their country.

Attest:

E. RANDOLPH,  
C. H. D.

About the same time a measure was enacted creating the county of Illinois, Virginia, which should include all territory northwest of the Ohio. The Governor was authorized to appoint a lieutenant commandant who should exercise civil and military authority. Governor Patrick Henry appointed Colonel John Todd, a Kentuckian who at that time was a judge of one of the courts in Kentucky. Todd received his instruction from Governor Henry. They were recorded in an ordinary blank book which Todd used for a record book in his office.

Todd gave attention first to the establishing of the courts, militia, and land claims. Order was restored in the several villages; legitimate trade and commerce encouraged; and the settlements placed on the road to prosperity. Colonel Todd returned to Kentucky, where he was killed in a battle with the Indians.

Clark was anxious, following the capture of Vincennes, to attack Detroit, but after building Fort Jefferson, just below Cairo on the Kentucky side, he was dismissed from the service and spent the remainder of his days on an estate near Louisville, Kentucky, where he died feeling that truly "republics are ungrateful."

### Illinois Prior to Statehood

To secure the ratification of the Articles of Confederation in 1781, the several states which held claims to western lands under old grants or otherwise, ceded their lands to the general government. These cessions took place in the years following 1781. In 1787 the Congress passed the famous Ordinance of 1787. This was a code of laws which should govern the settlers in the territory northwest of the Ohio River. It was drawn up by the confederation congress during the summer of 1787. Nathan Dane was chairman of the committee which drafted it, but the Rev. Manasseh Cutler of Boston was consulted as to some of its provisions.

This Ordinance provided that civil government in the Northwest Territory should be administered by a governor and three judges. These four sitting as a legislature could adopt laws from any of the older states and then enforce obedience to them. Military organizations were under the control of the governor, who was com-

mander-in-chief. Slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crimes whereof the person shall have been convicted, should not exist within the said territory northwest of the Ohio river.

The Rev. Manasseh Cutler planted a colony at the mouth of the Muskingum river in the summer of 1788. This place was called Marietta and to it Governor St. Clair and the three judges came and laid off the first county, namely: Washington, and made Marietta the county seat. They proceeded down the Ohio and laid off Hamilton county with Cincinnati as the county seat. From there they went to Kaskaskia where they laid off St. Clair county with Cahokia as the seat of justice, and lastly to Vincennes where they organized Knox county with Vincennes as the county seat.

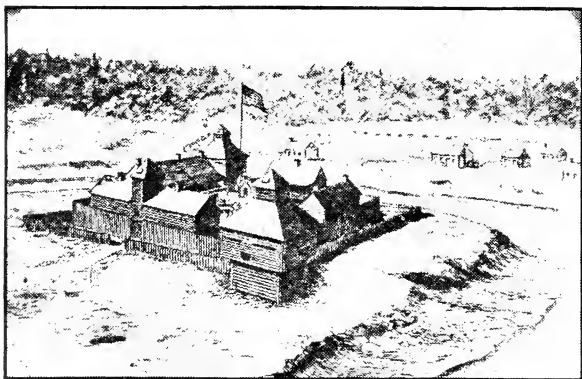
There was little well-organized civil government. There were county officers but they gave little attention to their official duties. St. Clair's time was taken up with contests with the Indians, and the government suffered from want of oversight. Population grew however, and in 1800 Indiana Territory was separated from the Northwest Territory. General William Henry Harrison became the governor of the Indiana Territory. Vincennes was the new capital. The population grew and the people of the west half began the agitation for a separation of Illinois from Indiana Territory. This was finally accomplished in 1809. Illinois Territory included what is now Illinois and Wisconsin.

The capital of the new Territory of Illinois was Kaskaskia. The governor was Ninian Edwards, and the secretary was Nathaniel Pope. Governor Edwards and the secretary and judges took up their official duties at Kaskaskia and the social and business interests of the once famous French capital were revived.

In 1811 Governor Harrison fought the battle of Tippecanoe, in which some Illinois people took part, one being killed—Captain Isaac White. In 1812 the war between the United States and Great Britain was under way. The Indians in Illinois sympathized with the British. General Hull surrendered Detroit, and the little band of United States troops as well as the few civilians at Fort Dearborn were in great danger. Captain Heald was counseled to abandon the place. He hesitated, but finally decided

to do so. An agreement was made with Indians in the vicinity of the fort that Captain Heald and his troops should be permitted to depart for Fort Wayne in safety—an escort of 500 Indians to accompany them.

On the morning of August 15, 1812, the little band of seventy-five United States troops, some militiamen, and a dozen or so of civilians started south along the lake shore. They had gone but a mile or so when they were surrounded by bloodthirsty Indians and in a pitched battle twenty-six regulars, twelve militiamen, two women, and twelve children were massacred. The rest of the little band surrendered and were taken back to the stockade and thence scattered among the several tribes



**Old Fort Dearborn.**

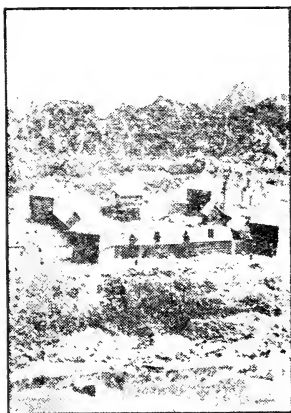
Erected in 1804, on the present site of Chicago.

Many of them were eventually ransomed. This massacre and other depredations upon the settlers aroused the people in the more thickly settled portions of the south end of the state. Governor Edwards was active in the defense of his people. Scores of block houses and stockades were built and occupied. These were generally built of logs just as we build a log house except the upper story projected over the lower part four or five feet on all four sides. Stockades were built by setting timbers upright in a ditch or trench and making the pieces so close together that the cracks were very small. These stockades often enclosed an acre or more.

The general government organized a regiment of troops

known as Rangers. They were commanded by Colonel William Russell of Kentucky. Illinois furnished several companies in this regiment. The Illinois Rangers rode their own horses, furnished their own clothing, guns and ammunition. They did loyal service in defending the settled portion of Illinois from the savages further to the north. Many Rangers came into prominence in the state in later years.

Fort Russell, a large stockade and blockhouses, was built a mile or more to the northwest of Edwardsville. It was defended with brass cannon from old Fort Chartres. Governor Edwards, as commander-in-chief of the military forces of the state, maintained headquarters here and tradition has it that the most exacting social and military etiquette prevailed. After the war was over and people forgot their military experiences, the old brass cannon was sold for junk—so it is said. There were several individuals and in one or two instances parts of families who were victims of Indian barbarity, but we shall not give them here.



Stockade and Blockhouses

Following the restoration of peace in 1815 immigration increased, population grew, new counties were organized, and in 1818 the territorial legislature applied for admission into the union. Nathaniel Pope was the territorial delegate and secured the enabling act with a number of very favorable provisions. The constitutional convention met in Kaskaskia on August 3, 1818. There were at that time fifteen counties, sending thirty-three delegates to the convention. Among the noted men in the convention were Jesse B. Thomas, John Messenger, James Lemen, Jr., Elias Kent Kane, Leonard White, Conrad Will and Thomas Kirkpatrick. The constitution was framed and sent to congress where it was accepted December 3, 1818, and Illinois became a sovereign State.

## Illinois Under the First Constitution

The first governor under the constitution was Shadrach Bond, an early comer to the Illinois country. The legislature met in Kaskaskia in January, 1819, and proceeded to organize the new government under the constitution. That document provided that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall hereafter be introduced into this state." But the old French slaves were already here and some free blacks.

To meet what seemed to be a great need, a Black Code was enacted which remained upon the statute books for nearly half a century. A few provisions are given in substance:

No black or mulatto person shall settle in the state unless he has a certificate of his freedom.

The certificate must be recorded with the clerk of the court.

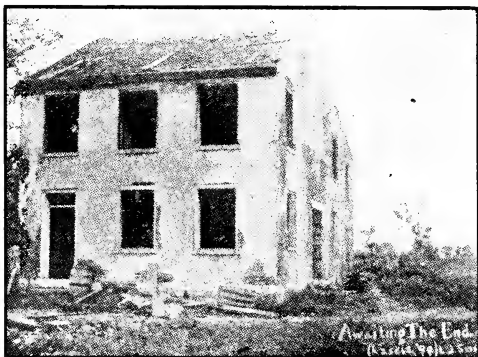
No person should free slaves in Illinois unless he gave bond for their good behavior.

No person could hire a negro to work unless the negro had a certificate of his freedom.

Negroes without certificates of freedom were subject to arrest and to be sold into slavery.

Negro servants could be whipped by consent of a justice of the peace, etc., etc.

The legislature at its first session passed a law providing for the removal of the capital of the state. This provided that it should be located on the Kaskaskia, east



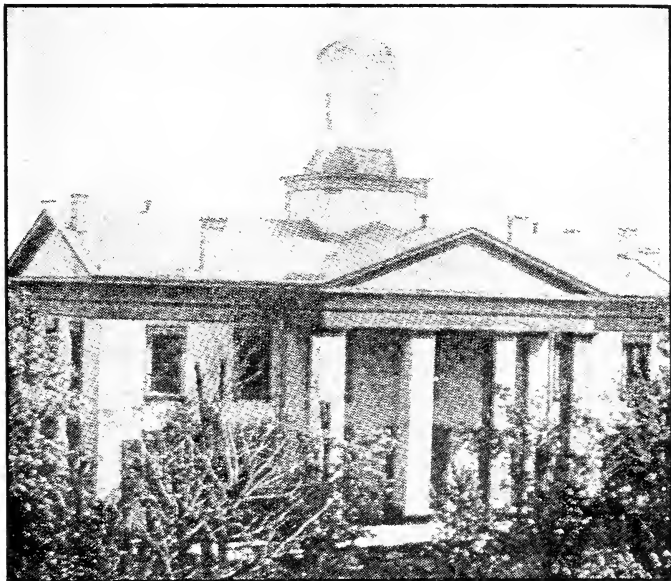
Old State House in Kaskaskia.

The State probably never owned a capitol building in Kaskaskia, but rented rooms for use of the Territorial and State legislatures. The above building was known as the Old State House. It has fallen into the river.



of the third principal meridian, and that it should remain there at least twenty years.

Vandalia, the new capital, was laid off on a grant of four square miles of land which the government generously gave the state for that purpose. A crude capitol building was erected, a few cabins arose in the wilderness, and in December 1820, the legislature convened in the new seat of government. This legislature enacted a banking law which created a State Bank. The charter



Capitol at Vandalia.

The first capitol at Vandalia was a small wooden structure two stories high. It burned December 9, 1823, and another building was erected at a cost of about \$15,000. This was torn down in 1836 and the above building erected. It now serves Fayette county as a county court house.

was for ten years and at the end of that time, 1831, the state had to borrow \$100,000 to redeem the outstanding bills which had been issued.

In 1822, the people chose Edward Coles as governor. He was a Virginian by birth and had been personally associated with Madison, Monroe, and Jefferson. He was bitterly opposed to slavery, having freed about twenty of

his slaves on the way down the Ohio. In his message to the legislature he suggested the freeing of the old French slaves in Illinois. This brought on a fight in the general assembly for a law calling a state convention to revise the constitution so as to admit slavery, just as did Kentucky and Missouri.

The slavery interests won in ordering an election in which the people should vote for or against a convention. The fight was long and bitter. It lasted from April 1822,



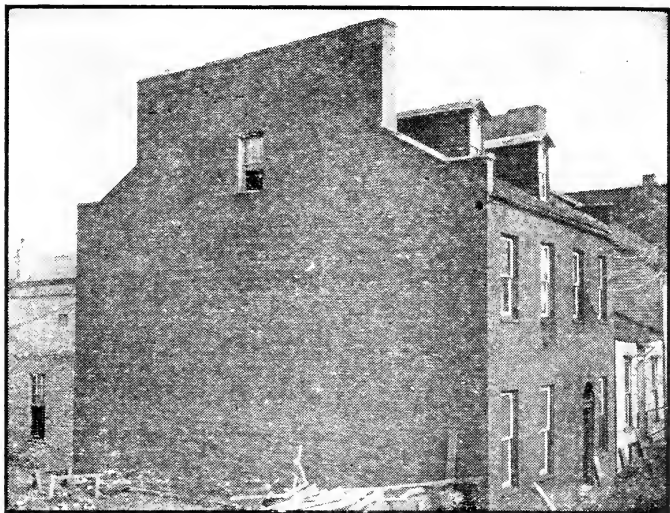
**General LaFayette.**

As he appeared at the time of his visit to Kaskaskia and Shawneetown. He was then 63 years old.

to August 1824. The people who wished to preserve the state a free state went vigorously into the canvas fully understanding the difficulty of the situation. There were brave hearts in those early days that shrank not from the heat of the conflict. Morris Birkbeck of Albion, an Englishman who, with George Flower, had founded the English Prairie settlement and had laid off the town of Albion, was in the forefront of the struggle against slavery. His work was chiefly through the columns of the papers of

those times, though he always expressed himself in public with great clearness and earnestness. Morris Birkbeck was the most striking figure in the state prior to the martyrdom of Lovejoy.

Edward Coles spent his salary for the four years—\$4,000—in furthering the cause of freedom. A third hero was the Rev. John M. Peck of Rock Spring, St. Clair county. He rode over the entire settled portion of the



Hotel in Shawneetown Where General La Fayette Was Banqueted.

state preaching the gospel of freedom. He was a power for righteousness. There were other self-sacrificing men whose names and work ought not to be forgotten. The result justified all the sacrifice that the people had made. The call for a convention was defeated and Illinois remained in theory, at least, a free state.

In the last half of Governor Coles' term, Illinois was honored by a visit from General Lafayette. He was the guest of the nation and planned to visit each state in the Union. At that time there were twenty-five states. He arrived at Kaskaskia on Saturday, April 30, 1825. He was enthusiastically welcomed by the English speaking people, but the French inhabitants were wild with delight

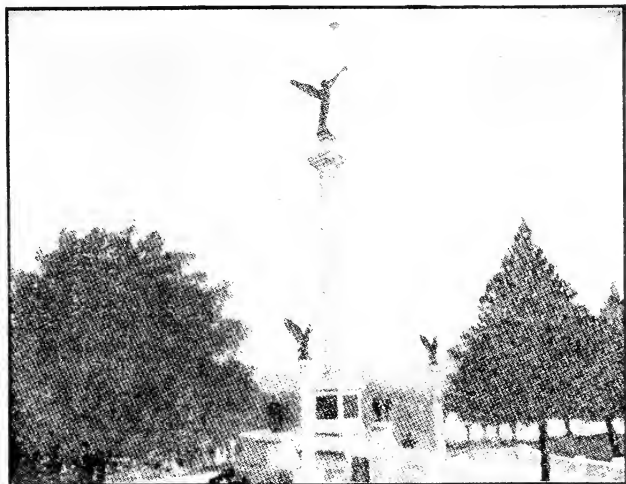
and even the Indians camped about Kaskaskia for several days prior to his coming. The old hotel where he was entertained stood for many, many years; an object of veneration by all who chanced to hear this story of the visit of one of the world's great men. From Kaskaskia the distinguished guest went up the Ohio. He stopped at Shawneetown and was given a royal welcome. After spending a few hours in this town, he passed on up the Ohio to Pittsburg.

The settlers were filling up the state pretty rapidly. In the region of Springfield, Jacksonville, and west to the Mississippi, there were many localities fairly well settled. The lead mines about Galena had brought a great many people to the northwest corner of the state. The coming of these people brought on trouble with the Indians. Although the Indians were under treaty to give up the lands east of the Mississippi River, they were loath to do so. This produced the Black Hawk war in 1832. Black Hawk had gone west of the river as he had agreed to do, but in the spring of 1832 he crossed to the east side and began to assume a warlike attitude. Governor Reynolds, who had done service as a Ranger in 1812, was prompt to call out the militia and in conjunction with the United States troops under General Atkinson the Indians were driven into Wisconsin where they were also attacked by militia, and after several small battles and great suffering of both whites and Indians, Black Hawk was driven west to the Mississippi, at a place where the Bad Axe River or Creek flows into that stream. Here the Indians were surrounded and in their desperation, between the river and the oncoming army, in the battle which followed were nearly all killed. Black Hawk became a state prisoner and traveled extensively in the East.

In 1836 the fever of internal improvement reached Illinois and the General Assembly mapped out a system of railroads, canals and other forms of internal improvement which the state undertook to carry out. There was not a dollar in the treasury for such improvements, but bonds were sold to the amount of ten or twelve million dollars. The work was begun, but the great financial crash of 1837 throughout the United States prevented the sale of bonds, the money already secured was unprofitably spent, and by 1840 the policy of the state was re-

versed. The debt eventually reached twenty million dollars, and the only thing realized out of all this enormous expenditure was twenty-five miles of railroad from Meredosia, on the Illinois River, to Jacksonville. This was the first steam road in the state.

Illinois has much history of which she is justly proud. But there is at least one dark blot upon the record. This is the murder of Elijah P. Lovejoy. This man was a martyr to free speech and free press. He edited a paper in Alton called the *Alton Observer*. He was outspoken



The Lovejoy Monument, Alton.

on the slavery question. The pro-slavery people destroyed three printing presses, and upon the arrival of the fourth one he and some friends decided to defend it, though they knew it would be at the risk of their lives. Sure enough, on the night of November 7, 1837, a mob surrounded the building where the fourth press was stored and before midnight had killed Lovejoy. The press was broken to pieces—the fourth one destroyed. Owen Lovejoy buried his brother and took a vow to spend the remainder of his days fighting slavery. A fine monument has been erected over his grave.

Governor Thomas Ford was inaugurated in December 1842. There soon arose a very perplexing question for

his administration. This was the Mormon problem. These people came into Illinois from Missouri in the spring of 1840. They built up the town of Nauvoo, in Hancock county. By 1842 there were 2,000 dwellings in the city and by 1844 there were 16,000 people. It is said they were driven from Missouri partly because they attacked slavery in the pulpit and in their press.

The Mormons became entangled in the meshes of the political net of Illinois. They held the balance of power between the Whigs and the Democrats, and thus secured a charter from the legislature of the state for Nauvoo which enabled these people to defy the power of the civil authority of the state. Great unrest prevailed in the western part of the state. Depredations of all kinds were laid at the door of the Mormons. They had in Nauvoo a well organized military force, with guns, ammunition and other equipment. The people rose in rebellion against the conditions which existed, the militia of the state was called out, Joseph Smith was induced to surrender himself to the civil authorities. He was lodged in the county jail for safe-keeping. Here he was murdered by a band of would-be peace-preservers. After this the Mormons concluded to abandon their city, and in the summer of 1846 great wagon trains conveyed these people to the present site of Salt Lake City, where they have made the desert to blossom as the rose.

### **Lincoln, Douglas and the Civil War**

John T. Stuart of Springfield was elected to congress on the Whig ticket in 1838. From that time on to 1854 there was always a Whig in the representation in Congress from this state. But in the Thirty-fourth Congress which met in December, 1855, Republicans took the place of Whigs. In 1856 a convention of Republican editors was held in Decatur. This Editors' Convention called a Republican State Convention for the nomination of state officers. The convention was held in Bloomington that summer. Colonel Wm. Bissell was nominated as the Republican candidate for governor of Illinois. Bissell was elected and with him four Republican congressmen out of nine. The Republican party had come into being.

At the Republican State Convention Abraham Lincoln, a former Whig but an ardent Anti-Nebraska man, delivered a great speech, which from the fact that it was not taken down in shorthand nor was given from manuscript, has been called the "Lost Speech." This speech marked Lincoln as the greatest exponent of the doctrines of the new party.

At the election of 1858 a legislature was to be chosen which would, in January 1859, elect a United States senator to take the place of Stephen A. Douglas, whose term would expire. Mr. Lincoln had served in the legislature and had served one term in congress, from 1847 to 1849. He was now the chosen standard-bearer of the Republican party to oppose Mr. Douglas for re-election. The two men were evenly matched in oratorical ability. Douglas probably was the more fluent public speaker but Lincoln the more convincing debater. After both men had spoken in Chicago and in Springfield, which were in the second and sixth congressional districts, respectively, a series of joint debates was arranged for in the other seven congressional districts namely, at Ottawa, La Salle county, August 21; Freeport, Stephenson county, August 27; Jonesboro, Union county, September 15; Charleston, Coles county, September 18; Galesburg, Knox county, October 7; Quincy, Adams county, October 13; Alton, Madison county, October 15.

This series of debates is easily the greatest political event that ever occurred in Illinois. Thousands of people heard these intellectual giants and their fame spread over the entire country. When the legislature met in January, 1859, Mr. Douglas was chosen to succeed himself, but Mr. Lincoln had won the presidency.

Mr. Lincoln had become the logical candidate of the newly formed Republican party for the presidency in 1860. In the national convention which met in Chicago in the summer of 1860, the East presented the names of William H. Seward of New York and Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania. The West presented the name of Abraham Lincoln of Illinois. Mr. Lincoln was nominated, with Hannibal Hamlin of Maine for vice president.

Mr. Douglas was the logical candidate of the northern Democrats, but the southern Democrats were bitterly opposed to him because of the position he took in the

debate with Mr. Lincoln. The national Democratic convention which met in Charleston, South Carolina, split into two factions, the main division naming Douglas for the presidency, and the other division putting forth John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky.

The campaign was spectacular indeed. Great rallies were held, orators poured forth the doctrine of squatter sovereignty, or the mitigation of the curse of slavery. Mr. Lincoln was elected and secession became the problem for the outgoing and incoming administrations. Fort Sumter was fired on and war was on.

Illinois took a very active and honorable part in the Civil War. It furnished the president, Abraham Lincoln; the commander-in-chief of the armies, Ulysses S. Grant; and the greatest volunteer soldier the world has ever seen, John A. Logan. In addition Illinois furnished one of the greatest "war governors," Richard Yates, several major generals and hundreds of brave officers of lower grade, to say nothing of nearly 200,000 men in the ranks.

In Congress in the early days of the conflict Illinois had such men as Elihu B. Washburn, Owen Lovejoy, John A. McClernand, John A. Logan; and later William Richardson, James C. Robinson, John T. Stuart, William R. Morrison and Shelby M. Cullom.

Since the close of the Civil War in 1865, Illinois has been engaged in developing her wonderful resources, building great cities, perfecting her means of transportation, advancing and enlarging her school facilities and building churches and homes. Politics has not been forgotten, but men have given their energies to the material, mental, social, educational and religious elevation of our people. A brief mention of some of these and our story shall have been told.

### **The Victories of Peace**

When the war closed and the proud commanders had led their victorious legions down Pennsylvania Avenue in the capital of the nation, they were disbanded to go to their homes and engage in the callings of civil life. The bitter hatred between the Union people and those who had sympathized with the secessionists soon died out. The doctrine advanced by many that the returned soldiers



would prove to be a lawless and dangerous class of people was disproved by the lives of industry, sobriety and orderly behavior which they led. The soldier boys it is true, had, for four years, been accustomed to the rough life of the camp, the march, the siege, the battle and the prison. But these varied experiences only served to deepen their appreciation of the tender associations of the home life.

And so it proved when the Illinois boys came home from the war, they took up the problems of peace and no period in the history of the state has ever shown such strides as were made in the decades following their return. Let us give a brief notice to this progress.

Our forefathers settled in the timber or on the edges of the prairies. The broad prairie areas were the last portions of the state settled. As late as 1865 there were thousands of acres of virgin prairie soil in the central part of the state. Eventually these prairies were all put in cultivation and from these farms there now comes the food for millions of people.

The census report of 1910 shows the population of Illinois to be 5,638,591. Approximate land area, 35,867,520 acres. Value of all farm property \$3,905,321,075. Value of domestic animals, \$269,619,153. Total bushels of corn, 390,218,676. Oats, 150,386,074 bushels. Wheat 37,830,732 bushels. Potatoes 12,166,091 bushels. Hay and forage, tons, 4,354,466. Truly Illinois is a great granary.

But Illinois has 37,000 square miles of coal deposits. The coal lies in seams, varying from a few inches in thickness to fifteen feet. There are 845 mines in operation, producing more than 50,000,000 tons annually, valued at \$56,064,494. These mines employ 77,410 men.

Railroad building began early in Illinois. The great prairies are practically level and railroad construction presented no serious problems for the engineers. Today the state is a net work of railroads.

These three facts—the agricultural resources, the presence of unlimited quantities of coal, and the easy means of transportation—are logically followed by two other important facts; the development of manufacturing industries, and the growth of cities. Chicago, the metropolis of the interior of the continent, has reached its import-

ance in very recent years. Many important cities, though not large like the older eastern cities, have sprung up here and there. Peoria, East St. Louis, Cairo, Joliet, Ottawa, Bloomington, Springfield, Danville and scores of lesser but thriving cities dot the entire map of the state.

The culture agencies have kept pace with the material development. The earliest settlers were from states where the free school system was unknown and schools were late coming into their recent importance. There were simple old-fashioned schools in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The second quarter of the century made little or no advance on the first. The third witnessed the founding of a free school system and the last quarter of the last century has marked wonderful advances in the material equipment, the character of the course of study and text books, as well as in the preparation of teachers and the methods of instruction.

The educational system is abreast of the times. Eight years are spent in the grades, four years in the high school, four years in college and from two to four in the technical schools. One year in the Normal schools fits for teaching if the young person has had college training. Agricultural courses are being installed in the Normal schools and in some high schools. Manual training and domestic science, music and art are a part of all well organized city systems.

And lastly, the religious and social life of the people is on a high plane. Every denomination is represented. Beautiful churches and an educated ministry are found in all the largest cities and even in towns and villages. These churches support home and foreign missionary work, and provide homes for orphans and for aged people and endow hospitals for the care of the sick and unfortunate. The women of the state are famed for their zeal in all social, religious and charitable enterprises. Womens' clubs flourish in all the towns and cities, and federations of clubs exert no little influence in moulding public opinion and in shaping legislation.

"Not without thy wondrous story,  
Illinois, Illinois."

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